Dr. COMBER's
SERMON
ON THE
Fast-Day,
BEING
Wednesday, *Aug.* 29*th.* 1694.

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THE REASONS OF *Praying for the Peace of our* JERUSALEM: IN A SERMON

Preached before the

Queen at Whitehall,

ON THE

Faſt-Day,

BEING

Wedneſday, *Auguſt* 29*th.* 1694.

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UMI

PSALM Cxxii. *Ver.* 6.

Pray for the Peace of Jeruſalem, *they ſhall Proſper that Love Thee.*

THat Rational Creatures ſhould ſo far imitate the worſt of Brutes, as to ſeek each others Deſtruction by Bloody War, ſeems ſo unnatural in it ſelf, and is ſo hardly reconcileable to the Principles of Chriſtianity; that ſome of the Ancient Fathers * thought it unlawful, and we our ſelves, while we are Engaged in it, do conſtantly pray for Peace: *'Tis only Evil men* (*ſaith S.* Aug.) *who count War their Happineſs, the Good are forced to it by dire neceſſity* *. Wherefore Religious Princes make no War out of choice, but when there is no other way to preſerve or reſtore Juſtice and Peace, then thoſe Arms that are neceſſary to ſuch ends muſt be Innocent; and this is our caſe. We loved Peace for its own ſake, and while we were allowed to enjoy this Bleſſing, we daily Praiſed God for it, and prayed for the continuance thereof; we endured many Hardſhips, and long ſtood on the very brink of Ruin, ſeeming unwilling

* Tertul. lib. de coron mil. & Arnob. adv. gent. lib. 1.

* Belligerare malis videtur fœlicitas, bonis neceſſitas. *Aug. C. D. l. 4. c. 15.*

willing to purchaſe our ſafety with the loſs of ſo dear a thing as Peace: and if the being longer patient had only hazarded our Temporal intereſt, perhaps it might have been reaſonable we ſhould have expected further. But when the means of our Eternal Salvation was at Stake, and others Faults had reduced us to the unhappy choice of parting either with Truth or Peace; then that Defence which nature allows to all became our Duty, and that neceſſity which forced us into a Defenſive War to ſecure our Liberties and our Religion, will not only Excuſe but Juſtifie us: Yet to ſhew our deſign is only to reſtore and preſerve our Peace, this day is ſet apart by our Gracious Prince, that we by Faſting and Prayer may Addreſs the Lord of Hoſts, and the God of Peace, for a happy Concluſion to the Preſent War, that it may end in an Univerſal and Laſting Peace: So ſhall our *JERUSALEM* be in proſperity all our days.

The Text aſſures us, Prayer is the means to procure this, and Their Majeſties this day require us all to take that Method; becauſe they truſt not ſo much in the Number or Strength of their Forces, as in the Aid of Heaven, and the Piety of their deſign, which is the Repoſe of *Europe*, and the Peace of this Church and Nation: An end ſo great and ſo good, that nothing but our Sins can hinder a Gracious God from granting it!

To remove which dangerous Impediment, a Faſt is Ordered to Uſher in our Prayers; that we may confeſs and forſake thoſe Sins, by unfeigned Repentance, which otherwiſe would make both our Supplications,

plications, and Their Majesties Arms, want their desired Success. We must be blinder than he in the Gospel, if we see not *That God heareth not Sinners* *; that is, Persevering and Impenitent Offenders. Wherefore, since we are to go this day to the Throne of Grace on so Important an Errand, as Peace, a Blessing Infinitely needed, Universally desired, and which none but he that hates all Iniquity can give us: Let us resolve before we begin to pray, to cast away from us all those Transgressions which have thus long turned away these good things from us: Thus Purified, and thus prepared, *Let us pray for the Peace of* Jerusalem. * Joh. 9. 31.

Which words do so earnestly perswade us to this necessary duty, and contain such proper directions and powerful Motives to it, that I hope it will be very serviceable to the ends of this Solemn Day: First, Clearly to Explain them, and then Practically to Apply them. But the Text cannot well be Explained, unless we reflect upon the whole Psalm, and consider on what occasion it was writ, and what Coherence these words have with those that precede, and those that follow them.

This 122. *Psalm* was certainly writ by an Inspir'd Pen-man, because it stands in the Cannon; but must be writ after *Davids* Time; because *Jerusalem* is called here (not *the City of* David, but) *the Seat of the house of* David *ver.* 5. which supposes *David* was then dead, and that some Righteous King of his Race *, who professed the true Religion, had his Seat there. And by the early and continued Apostacy of the Kings of *Israel*, we may justly suppose there was an Idolatrous

* Domus alicujus ponitur pro posteris ejus, ut, *domus Aaronis, domus Davidis*, &c. *Petr. Ravon. p.* 496. *Col.* 2.

trous Prince then Reigning over the Ten *Tribes*; Yet under that Government there were then many Pious *Iſraelites*, who had not made their Kings a complement of their Religion, and tho' they lived quietly under them, would not follow them to the Calves of *Dan* and *Bethel*; of which ſort God himſelf computes 7000. *Iſraelites* in *Ahabs* Perſecuting Reign *; but in more Peaceable times the true Prophets among theſe Ten *Tribes*, kept vaſt Numbers of that Kingdom ſteady to the true Religion, and the right way of Worſhip: The Scripture mentions not only their going up to *Jeruſalem*, on ſome exraordinary occaſions *, but ſpeaks of many that went up conſtantly to Worſhip there †; and the *Miſna* ſpeaks of all the Inhabitants of the *Holy Land*, coming to the Temple in Troops or Carravans, with their firſt Fruits, adding, that this *Pſalm* was made to be Sung by this Sacred Company in the way *, which is very probable, becauſe this Notion is a Key to the whole *Pſalm*, rendring it very plain and intelligible, as this brief Paraphraſe will ſhew.

* 1 Kings 19. 18.

* 2 Chron. 31. 11 Chap. 34. 33. & 35. *ver.* 17.

† 2 Chron. 11. 16.

* *Vid.* ap. Seld. Synedr. lib. 3. Cap. 13 p. 119.

Pſal. Cxxii. *Ver.* I. *Firſt*, We have their cheerful joyning themſelves to this Pious Society; *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, we will go*, &c.

Ver. II. Next, Here is their Reſolutions to hold out to the end of this Religious Journey, *Our feet ſhall ſtand in thy gates*, &c.

Ver. III. Their Reaſons follow, why they deſired ſo earneſtly, and reſolved ſo firmly to go thither.

Firſt,

First, Because the Kingdom of *Judah* professed only the one true Religion, while *Israel* was divided by variety: Jerusalem *is built as a City that is at Unity in it self.*

Secondly, Because the true Believers in the Dominions of *Israel*, always adhered to the right Worship established at *Jerusalem*; *For thither the Tribes go up, even the Tribes of the Lord.* Ver. IV.

1. To evidence to their Idolatrous Country men that they were Apostates, *to testifie unto* Israel. And,

2. *To give thanks to the Name of the Lord*, for preserving the rest of them in the true Religion.

Thirdly, Because *Moses* Law (even in secular cases) decided all things in this Kingdom of *Judah*, under the Kings of *Davids* Race: *For there is the Seat of Judgment, even the Seat of the House of* David. Ver. V.

Upon these Reasons, the *Israelites* (tho' subjects of another Kingdom) exhort one another in the Text, to pray for, and love *Jerusalem: O! pray for the peace of* Jerusalem; *they shall prosper*, &c. Ver. VI.

And they actually pray for its Peace and Plenty, *Peace be within thy Walls* (that is, among the Subjects of *Judah*) *and Plentiousness within thy Palaces*; (that is, to the King and Princes of *Jerusalem.*) Ver. VII.

Finally, They justifie this Charity: Ver. VIII.

First, Because they were their Brethren, and of the

ſame Religion with this Company of Faithful *Iſraelites: For my Brethren and Companions ſake, I will wiſh thee proſperity.*

Ver. 1X. And becauſe the Temple and true Worſhip of God was there, *Yea, becauſe of the houſe of the Lord our God, I will ſeek to do thee good.*

Now from this Literal ſenſe of the *Pſalm*, it is evident God's People then Believed their firſt and chief Allegiance was due to the King of Heaven; whoſe Truth they ought to profeſs and cleave to his Worſhip, tho their Natural Prince had forſaken both: It was then thought not only to be the duty of all the King of *Judahs* Subjects to pray for the peace of their own King, and the true Religion which he maintained; but the Believing Subjects of an Idolatrous Prince, thought themſelves bound in Conſcience to pray for the Proſperity and Succeſs of another King and Nation, where the true Religion was Profeſſed and Maintained, for the Lords part of the Ten *Tribes*, *pray for the Peace and Proſperity of* Jeruſalem. And it ſeems very plain, that if a War had happened wherein the ſafety of the Temple-worſhip and *Mount Sion* had been Concerned; all that believed themſelves obliged to Worſhip there, would have Unanimouſly prayed for *Jeruſalems* Proſperity and Peace, whoever were the Aggreſſor, or whoſe Subjects ſoever they were. And doubtleſs there was not one of Gods People then to be found in any Nation, who thought his Allegiance ty'd him to wiſh or pray for the Succeſs of any Prince, who ſought the ruine of that Religion which he believed to be true; I need not apply this, it is enough that I have

ſhewed,

shewed, All the Members of this Church at least, are indispensibly obliged this day, and always, to pray for such Princes as profess and maintain the Religion of this Church: That is, *to pray for the Peace of our Jerusalem.*

And so I pass to the words of the Text considered singly, wherein we have,

1. The precept it self. And,
2. The Motive Annexed by way of promise.

First, In the precept (*O pray for the Peace of* Jerusalem!) we have,

1. The subject matter of our Prayer, both in the general, which is *Peace*; and in particular, *the Peace of* Jerusalem.
2. Here is the means to attain this Blessing, and that is by *Prayer*. *O Pray for the Peace*, &c.

Second, In the Motive, we have a promise of prosperity to all that love it, and thus pray for it. *They shall prosper that love thee.*

First, The general subject of our prayers must be Peace, our God is the God of Peace, our Saviour the Prince of Peace, our Religion the Gospel of Peace; by the rules whereof, we are not allowed to pray for the destruction, no not of our worst Enemies *. *Balak* hired *Balaam* to curse his foes †, the *Pagan Goliah* was his own Chaplain, when he cursed *David* by his Gods ‖. Some of the most Barbarous * *Heathens*, and the modern *Turks* employ some of their Religious to imprecate all kinds of Vengeance on their enemies: And it must be from some of these that the *Roman* Church learned to Curse their Adversaries with Bell, Book, and Candle. They could not take this

* Mat. 5. 44. Luk. 6. 28.
† Num. 22. 17.
‖ 1 Sam. 17. 43.
* Sacerdos Athenienſis noluit pronuntiare execrationes in Alcibiadem. Ἐφη γαρ ἐυχῆς ὲ κατάρας Ιέρεια γεγονέναι. Ap. Plut. Quæſt. Rom.

this Leſſon out of the Goſpel of Jeſus, where the contrary is enjoyned, and where the Diſciples (who wiſhed fire from Heaven in their Maſters quarrel upon moſt inhuman wretches) were told, *They knew not what Spirit they were of**. The Ancient Liturgies had no Forms of execration, nor are there any in ours, which are exactly Copyed from them: We pray *That we may paſs our time in Reſt and Quietneſs*, and that God will give peace in our days; that, *we may be delivered from our Enemies, and that the Lord may forgive them and turn their hearts.* We pray, that he will *abate their Pride, aſſwage their Malice, and confound their Devices*; but we have not one petition for the deſtruction of their Perſons. And therefore while we are forced to defend our Religion and our Country, our Liberties and Lives againſt unjuſt Aggreſſors; we endure this neceſſary War as we do a Lancet or a bitter Medicine, in hopes by this ungrateful means to obtain the Bleſſed end of Peace; our Arms are not put on to Avenge paſt, but to prevent future miſchiefs, and they as well as our Prayers intirely aim at Peace, which our Gracious King deſigns ſo to eſtabliſh both at home and abroad, that thoſe who delight in War, may not have it in their power, any otherwiſe than by their wiſhes to diſturb it. Wherefore We and many other Nations are bound to pray for our own ſakes, that he may proſper; for this Peace which he fights for is the choiceſt and moſt comprehenſive of all earthly Bleſſings, and that which multiplies and gives a reliſh to all our other Comforts; allowing us eaſe and opportunities to enjoy them: In a word, 'tis the higheſt degree

* Luk. 9. 55.

gree of happineſs on this ſide Heaven, and the moſt lovely and lively Image of that Glorious place which this lower world can afford us: And this is the general ſubject of our prayers.

Secondly, But the Peace in my Text is more particular, 'tis *the Peace of Jeruſalem*; that is, we muſt pray for the Peace of Church and State, which I will ſhew is the meaning of that phraſe.

1. *Jeruſalem* was a very Ancient City, called at firſt *Salem*, and built by *Sem* (who is the ſame with *Melchiſedec**) who being Prince of that City, and Prieſt of the moſt High God; made it the Seat of his Government, and ſetled the true Religion there: Whence *Abraham* (being called out of his own Idolatrous Country) was fixed at *Hebron* near *Salem*, to be inſtructed by *Sem* in the Worſhip of the true God *. But afterwards this City was enjoyed by the Apoſtate *Canaanites*, who called it *Jebus*, till *David* expelled them, and their Idols out of it; and then it regained its old name of *Salem*, with an addition of *Jireh**, from *Abraham*'s viſion of Peace there, and ſo it came to be called *Jeruſalem*: And here *David* placed the Tabernacle †, and *Solomon* built the Temple, making it the Metropolis of the Jewiſh Nation, whoſe High-Prieſt reſided there; and all their ſolemn Worſhip was confined to that Place: For which reaſon, it is called *the City of God**, and *the Holy City* ‖; which Title of *Holy* Jeruſalem, was ſtamped on the *Shekels* coined there. In our Saviours time, it ſtill continued to be the place *where men ought to Worſhip**; and becauſe our Chriſtian Religion firſt came from thence, the Fathers call it *the Mother of Religion:*

* *Vid.* Targ. Hieroſol. in *Gen.* 14. 18.

* Hiſtor. Vindic. of Right of Tithes. *Part* 1. *pag.* 10.

*Gen. 22. 14.

† 2 Sam. 6. 16.

* Pſal. 46. 5.
‖ Dan. 9. 24. Mat. 4. 5.

* John 4. 20.

gion: And both the Old and New Teſtaments uſe
* Iſai. 24. 23. Galat. 4. 26. Heb. 12. 22. the name, *Jeruſalem*, for *the true Church* *. Wherefore to pray for the Peace of *Jeruſalem*, muſt here ſignifie in the firſt place, to pray for the proſperity of the true RELIGION, and for the Peace of the Church.

2. But further, here was the Palace and Reſidence of the Kings of *Judah*, of *David's* Houſe and Family; whence it was called *the City of* Da-
* 1 Chron. 11. 7. vid * in his life time, and afterwards *the Seat of the*
† Pſal. 122. 7. *Houſe of* David †: There were alſo the Courts of Juſtice, and the High Court of the *Sanhedrin* ſate there. So that this City was alſo the Fountain of
|| *Vid.* ibid. Law, and is thence called *the Seat of Judgment* ||; ſo that *Jeruſalem* is alſo put for the *Jewiſh* State and
* Iſa. 37. 22. Polity *; and to pray for its Peace, here ſignifies, to pray for the ſafety of the Kingdom of *Judah*, and the Proſperity of that Government alſo.

And as the phraſe imports, we ſhould pray for the Peace both of Church and State; ſo the Union that is between them under a Religious Prince, requires we ſhould not ſeparate them in our Supplications: For then Religion, and the Government, ſupport each other; their Intereſts are the ſame, they muſt ſtand and fall together. And our concern (if we be of the right Faith) muſt be great for the welfare of both theſe; the one being the means to ſecure our Salvation, the other to preſerve our Lives and Liberties; ſo that every one that hath any thing to loſe, or that hath a life to be preſerved, and a Soul to be ſaved, is bound not only in duty, but intereſt alſo (eſpecially in times of danger) to pray for the Peace

Peace of that Church whereof he is a Member, and of that Kingdom under which his Faith, as well as his perſon, is protected.

Now to make theſe prayers as affectionate, as they are juſt and neceſſary; I will ſeparately conſider the reaſons and motives why we ſhould pray for each of theſe moſt heartily at this time.

Firſt, We muſt all pray for the peace of this Church in which we were Baptized, with which we do communicate, and from which we receive all things neceſſary for our Souls health; and as no ſort of Chriſtians have ſo good a Church to pray for, ſo none ought to pray more devoutly than we: For this Church hath not omitted any one Ordinance that is of Divine Inſtitution, nor yet added any Invention of her own as an Eſſential and Neceſſary part of Religion. Her Faith and Worſhip are grounded only upon the Word of God, which is plainly tranſlated for all mens uſe, and clearly Expounded, as well as Practically applyed in the Rational and Elaborate Writings and Diſcourſes of her Miniſters, who have done as much to confute all Hereſies, and to promote Devotion as well as Good life, as any Clergy ever did. Her forms of Prayer are the beſt compoſure, and neereſt to the *Primitive* of any now extant: Her Government is that of the pureſt times, and her rules for Diſcipline (if the Age would bear them) are an excellent method to keep all things relating to the Church in good order.

Finally, When its Children live up to its Principles and Conſtitutions, they are the moſt Eminent Inſtances

Instances of Piety to God, Obedience to Religious Governours, and of Justice and Charity to their Neighbours that any Nation can shew.

And now can we, who have the blessing to be Born and Brought up in such a Church, behold it in danger by a POTENT Foe from Abroad, by Atheistical and Factious Enemies at Home; and by a Schism which some Angry Men are forming in her own Bowels, and not earnestly pray for Her Peace? The dumb Son of the rich *Eastern* King broke all the Ligaments of his, till then, silent Tongue, and cryed out, when he saw a Dagger aimed at his Fathers Life: But we see the Sword of a Cruel Persecutor, yet reeking with the Gore of a Sister Reformed Church, stretched out against our Holy Mother, we may discern a dangerous Combination among Her Mortal Enemies, and pretended Friends, for Her Destruction, and shall we be silent in such a juncture? One would think we forget the Importance of True Religion, and consider not, that our Souls and Eternal State depend upon it; otherwise our Prayers for its safety in these Circumstances, would be more hearty and importunate: A sincere Affection for this Reformed Church, would silence all the little Scruples that separate some Men from the Interest of those Princes, who are not in Title only, but Reality, *The Defenders of our Faith*: And if we did in earnest believe the Religion we profess to be the best, no Slight Reasonings, no Secret Disgust, nor Secular Advantage, could byas us, either to hate its apparent Friends, or wish well to its open Foes.

I know

I know there are ſome who are indifferent to all Religions, becauſe in truth they are of none; and theſe indeed value not the Church's Peace, ſo they can live in plenty, and wallow in exceſs; from ſuch we can expect neither Prayers nor Endeavours: But (bleſſed be God) there are many thouſands of the Beſt and wiſeſt, who aſſiſt us with both, and I hope will thereby ſecure our Eſtabliſhed Church, as well againſt the Faction of Mount *Gerizim*, as the Calves of *Dan* and *Bethel*. Yea, when this excellent Conſtitution was in danger to be broken in the late Reign, the Nation in general oppos'd it; and ſuch as ſeemed not much concern'd for the Practice of any Religion, were zealous to maintain the Profeſſion of this; which was a Demonſtration, that the greater Number wiſhed the Peace of our *Jeruſalem* then, and do now, I hope, pray for it. But that which is moſt to our Satisfaction, and the greateſt Encouragement to our Prayers, is thoſe many wonderful Providences which have both ſecured this Church in the extreameſt Dangers, and at the ſame time aſſured us, that Heaven is concerned for its Peace and Welfare; and *if GOD be for us, who can be againſt us* * ?

* Rom. VIII. ver. 31.

In a word, we have a very excellent Church to pray for, a Great and Good Company to join with us, a Mighty and moſt Gracious GOD to addreſs unto; wherefore we may juſtly hope theſe Prayers ſhall prevail ſo that we ſhall be delivered from

that Violence which would persecute us, from those Factions which would supplant us, and from those unhappy Mistakes which do divide and weaken us: And then this pure and well-constituted Church will shine out in all its Glory, to the Honour of GOD, the Comfort of its Deliverers, and all its faithful Children; yea, to the Content and Wonder of all regular Reformed Churches.

Secondly, We must all pray for the Peace of the State also; especially when our Governours are (as those of *David*'s House were) Professors a Protectors of the True Religion. *The Church* (as St. *Ambrose* notes) *is in the Common wealth*, and cannot have Peace while that is embroiled by Sedition, shaken by Rebellion, or over-run by a foreign Enemy: And therefore GOD, by his true Prophet *Jeremiah*, orders the Captive *Jews*, *To pray for the Peace of the* Babylonian *Empire* (which let them serve GOD in their own way) *because in the Peace thereof they would have Peace* *. And in the New Testament, where the Motives to Duty are refined, St. *Paul* persuades Christians to pray for their Governours, upon this ground, *That under them they might lead quiet and peaceable Lives, in all Godliness and Honesty* *: Which Argument supposes such Princes as would not use their own Freedom from other Enemies, as an Opportunity to disturb or destroy such innocent and honest Subjects as the Christians were; for it invites them to pray for their Governours Peace, that they may have a share in all the Blessings

* Jer. XXIX. 7.

* 1 Tim XI. 1, 2, 3.

ſings of that Tranquility, which was the Fruit of their Prayers: And (bleſſed be GOD) this will be our caſe, ſo ſoon as our Prayers can procure Peace to our King, whoſe chief End, in all his Councils, and principal Aim in expoſing his Life, is to eſtabliſh the True Religion, and procure a happy Peace for all that profeſs it: So that his Victory and Succeſs will turn entirely to our Advantage. He hath the Toil and Hazard, and will have the Glory of this generous Attempt; but the Benefit and Comfort will be to us and our Poſterity; and therefore, by the Apoſtle's Argument, we muſt pray for Him.

This Government, under GOD, is the next, and (without Miracles, not to be expected in this Age) the only Means to preſerve this Reformed Church: So that it is the ſame thing in effect to pray for the Church, and for its Defenders; becauſe their Proſperity and ours turn upon the ſame Hinge, advance or ſink in the ſame Degrees; they did riſe, and muſt ceaſe together. I confeſs it ſeems very odd to me, that any Proteſtants ſhould pretend their Conſcience forbids them to pray for the Princes who protect the Reformation, or obliges them to wiſh well to ſuch as have endeavoured its Extirpation; becauſe I cannot underſtand how my Religion can bind me to pray againſt my Religion; or how I can be tied to both Parts of a Contradiction, that is, to pray for the Peace of *Jeruſalem*, and at the

ſame time to wiſh they may proſper that hate it, and will (if ever it be in their Power) deſtroy it. If my Natural Prince, or my neareſt Relation were engaged in ſo evil a Deſign, my Duty to GOD, which takes place of all other Obligations, would bind me to pray they might never proſper: And if the miſtaken Pretences of Loyalty or Duty were urged, I muſt plead our Lord's Deciſion of this Caſe, who ſaith, *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me* *. But we are told the Primitive Chriſtians prayed for the Enemies and Perſecutors of their Religion: I anſwer, There is not one Inſtance of any of the Primitive Martyrs or Fathers, praying that any Prince might proſper in his Endeavours to perſecute, or his Deſigns to deſtroy Chriſtianity: This will be a new Diſcovery, reſerved perhaps for ſome of thoſe who need ſuch a Precedent for their Excuſe. 'Tis true, their very profeſſing a new and ſtrange Religion, actually made them Out-laws, while the *Roman* Empire was Heathen *. And when the Pagan Emperours took Advantage by theſe Laws to perſecute, they ſuffered patiently; but never would either Pray or Fight againſt the Chriſtianity they profeſſed: Yea, they daily and earneſtly prayed againſt the Evils they ſubmitted to; and one of their Petitions then was this of my Text, *For the Peace of the Church.* Moreover, they

* Mat. X. 37.

Καὶ πρὸς γονέας ἡμῖν ὁ πόλεμος, ἀνέγκλητός τε καὶ ἀνέπληπτος, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ παντὸς ἐπαίνου μεστὸς, ὅτε τῇ τοῦ χριστοῦ δόξῃ συναθλεῖν ἐγνώκαμεν, D. Cyril ep ad Juvenal. ap. Concil. Epheſ. par. 1. Bin. p. 147.

* Qui novas & incognitas Religiones introducunt, quibus animi hominum moveantur, honeſtiores deportantur, humiliores capite plectuntur Jul. Paulus recep. Sentent. Lib. 5. Tit. 21.

they addreſſed to their Perſecutors for Peace, and writ ſmart Apologies for themſelves, expoſing the Cruelty of their Enemies, and taking notice of all the Examples of Divine Juſtice upon the Authors of theſe barbarous Perſecutions; * They were as far from wiſhing Croſſes, as from worſhipping them: † They begged earneſtly for deliverance from their Enemies, and praiſed God heartily for that Mercy, whether it came from the Clemency of the Reigning Emperor, or from the ſeaſonable ſuccour of a Neighbour Prince: And their Actions were a true Copy of our Saviour's Advice, an happy mixture of the Wiſdom of the Serpent, (without its poiſon) and the Innocence of the Dove (without its ſimplicity.) † It hath been often obſerved by others, and ſo I will but juſt mention it: That thoſe Chriſtians in *Italy* and the *Eaſt*, who lived under Perſecuting Emperors, complained to *Conſtantine*, who Governed in a ſeparate ſhare of the Empire, and obtained firſt his Interceſſion, and (when that would not prevail) his aſſiſtance by Arms, to free them from their cruel Sufferings, and their Prayers for the Church's Peace, (which then included his Succeſs in that deſign) were heard by Heaven, to which they returned hearty praiſes for that great deliverance: Which if it were calmly conſidered by our Worthy Brethren, who juſtly admire Primitive Patterns, might happily unite us once again; ſo that all we who agree in our Affections to this Church, might alſo do ſo in Praying unanimouſly for

* *Vid.* Lactant. *de mort. perſecutor.*

† ‖ *Cruces nec optamus, nec colimus. Off. ap. Min. Fœl.*

† *Math.* 10. 16.

for its Deliverers: And the *Romaniſts* cannot with any Modeſty object againſt our general uſe of theſe Prayers; becauſe ſuch of them as were *Engliſh* Subjects, did never ſince the Reformation pray for any King of *England*, or any of the Royal Family by Name (how indulgently ſoever they were treated) unleſs they profeſſed their own Religion *; and there is no reaſon why they ſhould be truer to the intereſt of a Corrupt Church, than we are to thoſe of one that is purely Reformed. Nor do I ſee why (in a caſe which I have proved Lawful) we ſhould not learn Wiſdom, even from our Adverſaries.

* See the brief Method of hearing Maſs, pag. 43, & 44. Printed at *London*, 1686.

And this may ſuffice for the Reaſons, why we ſhould pray for our *Jeruſalem*, as it is now conſtituted in the State, upon the Account of the Church and the true Religion it defends.

But there are other Conſiderations which are more Secular, why we ſhould all now pray for the Peace of the Civil Government, becauſe it's Quiet, and proſperity is the great Security of our Lives, Liberties, and Eſtates. Wars and Tumults may for a time, hinder the moſt righteous Princes from executing the Laws, and doing that Right to every Man, as they deſire: But ſince we have Rulers, who make GOD's Word the Guide of their Conſciences, and the Laws a Rule to all their Actions; we have but one thing to wiſh on their behalf, *viz.* That they may have Peace; for then we are ſure, Juſtice will run down like a Stream, and Righteouſneſs

Righteouſneſs like a mighty River; Innocency will be guarded, Induſtry encouraged, Virtue rewarded, and Vice every where diſgraced and puniſhed: When ſuch Princes have Peace, all their Subjects are bleſſed with Right and Equity, Eaſe and Safety, Plenty and Proſperity; then the Rich are not allowed to oppreſs the Poor, nor theſe permitted to injure or affront the Rich; the Nobility are honoured, the Clergy reverenced, the Citizens grow in Wealth, the Country abounds in Plenty, Learning and ingenuous Arts flouriſh, Commerce and Trade increaſes by Sea and Land, and the Nation is quiet at home, feared and honoured abroad; yea, every private Man enjoys freely, and without diſturbance, whatever he can call his own, and is as happy as his Heart can wiſh, or his Condition bear: In a word, *There will be then no leading into Captivity, no complaining in our Streets;—and all muſt grant the People are Happy, that are in ſuch a Caſe* * To bleſs a King whoſe Subjects ſhare with him in all his good Fortune and Succeſs, is the way for God to bleſs a whole Nation at once. So that he doth not love his Country, nor his Friends, his Family, nor himſelf, who (ſince this will be our Caſe, ſo ſoon as our Prayers can obtain Peace) will not heartily, and devoutly pray for the Peace and Proſperity of our *Jeruſalem*. The conſideration of ſo many ineſtimable Benefits to the Publick, and every private good Man, if theſe Prayers prevail, muſt encline all our Hearts to preſent them with great Devotion.

* Pſal. CXLIV. 13.

Which

II. Which brings me to the ſecond particular in the Precept, which is the means to obtain this Bleſſing; and the ſame holy Spirit, which orders the Subject of our Requeſts, to be *the Peace of Jeruſalem*, appoints Prayer, as the means to procure it; which cannot well fail, when he that hath power to grant, commands us to ask, and thereby ſhews he intends to give *. Beſides, this is in every Man's Power to do. He that is no Stateſman to adviſe, nor Souldier to fight for Peace, may at all times pray for it; yet, neither the Councellor nor Warriors muſt omit it, ſince neither Wiſdom, nor Strength can prevail without the Divine Bleſſing; and the reſt of the People (who will have a great ſhare in this Bleſſing, when it is gained) can contribute no other ways to it, than by their Prayers. Wherefore, we ought all to excite one another to this Duty, as this Holy *Caravan* in the Text did, ſaying, *O pray for*; or, *let us pray for the Peace of Jeruſalem.*

* Hortatur ut petas, negabit quod petis? *Aug. de verb. Dom. ſect. 5. in Mat. VII. 7.*

Prayer is the means to procure all Bleſſings; and whatever our Caſe be, the Apoſtle bids us *to be careful for nothing; but in every thing by Prayer and Supplication;—to let our Requeſts be made known to GOD* †. Let our Danger be never ſo great, we are promiſed, *if we call on the Name of the LORD, we ſhall be ſaved* ‖. And he doth not deſerve ſuch a Mercy as Peace, who

† Phil. IV. 6.

‖ Rom. X. 3.

who will not heartily pray for it, since none can have a mighty Benefit at a cheaper Rate: There never was any Nation (who had any Sense of Religion) that did not make solemn Addresses to their GODS in times of War. *Servius* tells us, *the* Romans *on such Occasions, went into the Temple of* MARS, *and shaking his Spear and Shield, cried, Awake thou GOD of War* *. And *Turnebus* notes, that the Mothers and Sisters of the *Roman* Souldiers made solemn Vows and Prayers, for their return in Peace; and when they came home safe, they paid those Vows.

* Servius in 8. Æne.

But to return to Scripture; *Jacob*'s Prayer procured him Peace from both his incensed Father in Law, and his inraged Brother †. *Moses* by the same means got a Glorious Victory over *Amalek*, which opened him a Passage toward the Land of *Canaan* ‖. *Saul* durst not encounter the *Philistines*, till he had armed himself with Sacrifice and Prayer; and he resolved to be his own Priest, rather than begin the Battle without so necessary a preparation *; and when *David*'s ungrateful Foes combined together against him, *he gave himself unto Prayer* †: The Famous *Constantine* in that War which he made to avert the Persecution, drew up a form of Prayer, and taught it to his Souldiers; requiring them to spend the day before the Fight in Fasting and Supplication, as he also did ‖. And to name no more, an Ancient Council decrees, *There should be Forms of Prayer used*

† Gen. Chap. 31, & 33.

‖ Exod. 17. 11, 12.

* 1 Sam. 13, 12.

† Psalm. 109. 4.

‖ Euseb. vitâ Constant. lib. 2. cap. 4, &c.

by the Clergy in times of War, for the Prosperity of the King, and the Peace of the Church *. The like Command we have now from their present Majesties, who thereby declare (with their pious Ancestor, King *Edward* the Confessor,) *That they trust more in the Churches Prayers, than in all other Weapons* *: For indeed, this is the way to gain the Favour of Heaven, and JESUS himself to be on our Side. Our Enemies no doubt have sought their Holy Fathers Benediction, applyed to Saints and the Blessed Virgin: But we call only upon the Name of JESUS CHRIST; and I hope it will prove, as it did of Old, in the great Battle of *Poictiers*, when the *French*, who had got the Pope's Blessing, were beat by the *English*, who trusted in CHRIST their Saviour; *Men said* (they are the Words of an old, but honest Monkish Historian) *Behold the Pope was on the* French, *and JESUS on the* English *Side; so that we have seen this Day, which of these can do most for his Friends* †.

*Concil. Emeritan can. 3. Anno 665.

* Spelm. Leg. *Edward* 1. conf. L. 12. pag. 621. Concil. tom. 1

† Knighton Chronic. pag. 2615.

Let us therefore firmly trust in CHRIST, and Pray to him Devoutly, and the Event will be so now, to the Glory of the GOD we serve and our universal Satisfaction: Only let us take care to Repent unfeignedly of all our Sins, which otherwise will obstruct the success, both of our Prayers, and our Arms also: If we forsake not our Iniquities, they will be our worst Enemies, and cause GOD to depart from us, and

and then with him we loſe all good things, and may fear, all kind of Evils will break in upon us. To prevent which, let us this Day humble our Souls with Faſting, and pour out moſt hearty Prayers, ſo ſhall we gain his Favour, of whoſe Help we have ſuch preſent need, and who alone can give us that which we ſo much deſire, even *Peace upon our Iſrael.*

III. *Laſtly*, We muſt briefly ſurvey the Promiſe, which is an excellent motive to excite us to pray for *Jeruſalem*'s Peace; for we are aſſured, *They ſhall proſper that love it.* Now Firſt, this plainly ſuppoſes, that all that pray for its Peace, do ſincerely love it, and that all *Jeruſalem*'s Friends will expreſs their Affections by their Prayers for it; the Conſequence whereof is, that they are Enemies both to Church and State, who at ſuch a time as this, withold their Prayers: But hereby they hurt themſelves, more than *Jeruſalem*; for we may gather from the Text, that ſuch as hate it ſhall not proſper: It may be ſaid of true Religion, as it was of *Abraham* *, *Bleſſed ſhall he be that bleſſeth it, and curſed he that curſeth it.* * Gen. 12. v. 3.

Theſe Men rather gratifie their Humour, than conſult their Intereſt. They may fret and repine at the Succeſs, and ſecrely wiſh the Ruin of *Jeruſalem*: But it ſhall ſo proſper, that they ſhall be continually vexed, and as miſerable as provoked Envy can make them: While they that

love and pray for *Jeruſalem*, have GOD's Promiſe, *They ſhall proſper* (as we read) or, *They ſhall be quiet** (as *Junius* tranſlates): From which different Verſions, (both agreeable to the Original) we expound the Promiſe two ways.

* Jun. & Tremel. in loc. Pſal. 122. 6.

Firſt, *That thoſe who love and pray for* Jeruſalem, *ſhall proſper in thoſe Prayers*, and prevail with GOD to grant them the ſatisfaction of ſeeing this War concluded by an advantageous and laſting Peace: And Oh! how great a delight will it be to a true Lover of his Religion and his Country, to ſee them ſetled in Peace, and flouriſhing in Proſperity; eſpecially, when he hath this addition to his Comfort, that he contributed to it by his Prayers? And how can thoſe Prayers fail, which are made by GOD's own direction, and founded upon Principles of ſincere Piety, and univerſal Charity? It may be this Lover of *Jeruſalem* might have ſhifted well enough, though the Publick ſhould be ſtill embroiled; but he conſiders the miſeries and loſſes of Thouſands while the War continues, and if it prove unſucceſful at laſt, he foreſees it may coſt many Millions their Lives, ruine the Liberties of the Nation, and bring the eſtabliſh'd Church under a fatal perſecution; and while he reflects on this with a noble Compaſſion, he earneſtly prays for *Jeruſalem*'s Peace and Proſperity; and ſuch Devotion and Charity can never fail.

Secondly,

Secondly, When GOD hath heard these Prayers, *He shall be quiet*; that is, enjoy freely the Benefits of that Peace, which his humble Petitions procured: It is promised to those that fear GOD (as these Men certainly do) *That they shall see* Jerusalem *in Prosperity all their Lives long* *; and this no doubt will double all the Comforts of their private Fortunes, to behold true Religion freely professed and generally practised; to see the Church in Peace and Safety, and its Deliverers reaping the Fruit of their Labours, and the just Reward of their Charity; while they abound in Wealth and Honour, and all their Subjects share with them in Plenty and Prosperity: What can be a more pleasing Prospect, than to live in those *Halcyon* Days, when the Miseries of War are all blown over, and all the Blessings of Peace restored? And when we may not only freely enjoy our Estates, our Liberties, and our Religion all our time; but leave them all for an Inheritance to our Children? Methinks, the hopes of of this at some distance, being grounded on this most gracious Promise, should make us all with these pious *Israelites*, zealously and importunately pray for our *Jerusalem*, *That Peace may be within the Walls of the Church and of our Cities, and Plenty within the Pallaces of our Governors. Here live our Brethren and Relations, our Friends and Companions; and shall we not wish them Prosperity? Here also is the House of the LORD our GOD, and we who Worship there, ought to seeke its welfare*, and to be

* Psal. 128. v. 5, 6.

be as unanimous in our Prayers and Endeavours for its good, as we are in profeſſing our Love to it.

Now the GOD *of Peace grant us all to be like-minded*, and to have a right Judgment in all things; that being united at home in our Prayers and Affections, we may the ſooner obtain Victory abroad over our common Foes, and procure the univerſal Bleſſing of a firm and laſting Peace; to which let all the People ſay* Amen. *And in hopes of which, let us aſcribe to* GOD *the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, all Honour and Glory, Power and Praiſe, which is moſt due from us, and all the World, now and ever,* Amen.

* Phil. 2. v. 2.

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